DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 342 711 SO 021 962

AUTHOR DiSiena, Julie
TITLE Selecting Stories for Multicultural Art Lessons (Kindergarten-2nd Grade Emphasis).
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 7p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Art Activities; Art Appreciation; *Art Education; *Childrens Art; *Creative Expression; Cultural Awareness; *Cultural Influences; *Multicultural Education; Primary Education; *Story Telling
IDENTIFIERS McDermott (Gerald); Tadjo (Veronique)

ABSTRACT

Storytelling has cultural roots and this can be employed to teach a culturally pluralistic curriculum. Stories can be selected from a variety of sources and used to match lesson objectives. Criteria for selecting stories should include the authenticity of cultural representation, the amount of cultural information, appropriateness, and the estimated interest of the child. In art education, these stories can be used as a basis for lessons on mask-making, drawing, toy-making, kite-making, origami, oriental brush painting, puppets, patterned quilts, and art history. Examples of stories include "Lord of the Dance" by Veronique Tadjo which explains the intended use of masks in African ceremonies, and "Arrow to the Sun" by Gerald McDermott, a story about American Indians. The most important aspect of verbal and visual storytelling is that students are given opportunities to express their own feelings about the world around them. (KM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED342711

SELECTING STORIES FOR MULTICULTURAL ART LESSONS

(Kindergarten-2nd Grade Emphasis)

Julie DiSiena

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

JULIE DISIENA

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

216 662-9412

20744 Applegate

Maple Hts., Ohio 44137

SO 021 962

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

I believe in the value of teaching a culturally pluralistic curriculum. Cultural pluralism implies the difference within and between cultures (Broughton, 1986). "Among the many means that art teachers (probably all teachers) have to realize these goals, I have discovered that picturebooks are particularly potent" (Marantz, 1989). Storytelling like drawing has cultural roots. Parents tell stories to children, and children tell stories, too (Wilson, 1982). It is a natural way to speak to the children and to hold their attention. Stories, like myths and fables, make lessons easier to remember. My students make art (studio), talk about their art and other artists work (art criticism), learn how to recognize some artists work and styles (art history), and experience beauty and joy in their own work (aesthetics); through our weekly involvement with storytelling.

DESCRIPTION OF GROUP POPULATION

The children's reactions have slowly revealed their background or preferences as we talk about different cultures. I have approximately 300 students. My population is 85% caucasion, 11% black, 1% arabian, 1% American Indian, 1% Oriental, and 1% Indian.

SOURCES FOR STORIES

The sources I use to find my stories are varied. I loved children's books in my youth and became interested in them again at a lecture by Ken Marantz at Cleveland State University. I use several books reviewed in Marantz's articles, "making the Unknown Knowable Through Picture Books" in the Fall 1989 issue of Journal of Multicultural and Cross-Cultural Research in Art Education and "Books in Our Landscape" for Ohio Art Line.

His reviews are helpful because they explain the artististic and verbal merits or shortcomings of the selected book. I also visit the Akron art Museum's Explore and Discover children's exhibit every year. Children's books are displayed for reading. Museum bookstores in the United States and abroad are also a good source. I use libraries and commercially produced materials such as Art Image by Monique Briere. "Skipping Stones" quaterly has multicultural poetry, drawing, and stories. Fellow teachers or friends from other countries have also helped me with selections.

CRITEREA FOR SELECTION

The criterea I use to select my stories are authenticity of cultural representation, the amount of cultural information, appropriateness for the age of my students, the estimated interest to the child, and my lesson objectives. Occasionally trial and error determines the use of a story. An Indian art work and story I used from the New Orleans's Museum of art Children's page, although enjoyed by my students, created trouble among parents. There were little men in the picture. My children asked what they were. I replied demons, which is what the the story said. I intend to still use an an Indian miniature, but a less controversial one. These are found in an adult book which I adapted to children (Ehnbom, 1985). I like it because it is directly from the culture and not wriiten about it. I use the Persian picture with a story written in Arabic from Art Image (even though image is a little small 16" by 20"), Stories of Old Japan by Kiyoaki Nakao and a current Japanese art first grade book for the same reason. The story "Tennyo no Hagoromo" is the basis of the Japanese Star Festival still celebrated today. I use the Japan art text to make a toy so the children can share in a modern Japanese child's school day. Arrow To The Sun by Gerald McDermott and

Lord Of The Dance by Veronique Tadjo are easily understood by the children. To use The Sing-Song Of Old Man Kangaroo by Rudyard Kipling I need to explain the story first. It represents an Australian primitive culture with a nice Aboriginal traditional sing-song pattern. I find my children are interested in every story I tell as long as I adequately explain the story or they understand it themselves. They become restless if they do not. I both find stories to match lesson objectives and match objectives to stories if I think they are exceptional.

LESSONS USING STORIES

The lessons I use to accompany the stories I use are masks, drawing, toymaking, kites, origami, oriental brush painting, puppets, patterned quilts and art history. For masks, although I use culturally pluralistic examples, I emphasized African. The book Lord Of The Dance explained the intended use of masks in Africa for dance and ceremony. It is rhythmic in its visual and verbal form. The words tom tom are repeated to represent the drum and at those words I beat an African drum. The beat involves the student as if part of the ceremony and helps impart the feeling of the culture. I read Mweru The Ostrich Girl by Charity Waciuma simply for our enjoyment yet it is filled with the folklore and images of Africa. With the Persian story children do inside outside pictures of what is happening at Christmas. The Old Stories Of Japan are not illustrated. I read them when we do origami, toymaking, kites, and oriental brush painting. Lon Po Po by Ed Young is a story I either just read or have them illustrate it. Tar Beach is an inspiration to make group patterned paper quilts and show Amish and Early American quilts. It is by Faith Rhinegold who is famous for her art quilts. We talk about Indonesian puppetry although I do not have a good story yet. Then my students make stick puppets, some with moveable parts

(Colbert, 1990). This year we will incorporate Hispanic with a mural. How Night Came by Joanna Troughton is a good folktale of the Amazon. Two authors have individual books on artists which I use to teach art history, Ernest Raboff and Mike Venezia.. They are not multicultural.

Authenticity And Simulation

Authenticity and simulation was the most evident in Arrow TO The Sun. I read the story and showed the pictures to the children. The homes for the Indians in the book are boxlike. Some children's drawings still pictured Teepees, a simulation they had learned prior to the lesson and they thought applied to all Indians. Other children who were mimicing the book were also authentically representing the Indian homes in the story. I believe this type of housing was unknown to most of the children until this book. Children had expanded their concept of Indians. They also absorbed the moral of bravery with the stimulating trials most frequently pictured. The Persian story was illustrated with an Oriental perspective. The children did not imitate this Xray view. When asked to draw a story from their life, after seeing Indian miniatures, they responded with very original pictures. They drew going to Pizza Hut, eating, sleeping, playing nintendo, etc. This is a good time to discuss universal verses relative (Hamblen, 1986) of the two countries. I found when the child was the subject of the picture almost no simulation occurred as opposed to when they illustrated the story.

CONCLUSION

The most important part about verbal and visual storytelling is the students use of them to express their feelings in their art, about their art and the world around them. Available time to use stories makes selection limited and important.

Boughton, Doug. (1986). "How do we prepare art teachers for a multi-cultural society". Journal of Multicultural and Cross-Cultural Research in Art Education; 4 (1), 94-99.

Briere, Monique. (1988). Art Image 1. Chamlain, New York: Art Image Publications.

Colbert, Cynthia and Taunton, Martha. (1990). Discover Art Kindergarten. Worcester, Massachusetts: Davis Publications, Inc.

Ehnbom, Daniel J. (1985). Indian Miniatures. New York: Hudson Hills Press.

Hamblen, Karen A. (1986). "A universal- relative approach to the study of cross-cultural art". Journal of Multicultural and Cross-cultural Research in Art Education; 4 (1), 69-77.

Marantz, Kenneth. (1989). "Making the Unknown More Knowable Through Picture Books". Journal of Multicultural and Cross-cultural Research in Art Education; 7 (1), 132-139.

Wilson, Brent and Wilson, Marjorie. (1982). Teaching Children To Draw. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.